

APR 21 1955

Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

VOL. XV, No. 6

APRIL 18, 1955

\$2.50 per year; 15 cents per copy

Our Distorted View of Asia

THERE is something wrong in our whole orientation toward Asia which fatefully bedevils our national policy on particular issues. Some of the misconceptions which give rise to this wrong orientation will be suggested in this editorial.

1. *There is a tendency to interpret the struggle with communism in Asia too much in military terms.* In criticizing this we must not neglect the military factor. If there were no military balance in the world, not even the nations which are most neutralist in outlook would have as much freedom from blackmailing pressure from the Communists as they have. The security of India from such pressure depends more than her leaders would ever admit on our military power. And yet, when this has been said, we should go on to say that the greatest strength of communism in Asia is its capacity to exploit the political and the social weakness of a nation. Its chief instruments are propaganda, conspiracy, and the loyal support of a small but disciplined and strategically placed national Communist movement in any country on which it has designs. The background of resentment against Western imperialism gives communism an enormous advantage in its propaganda. The existence of the Red armies is an important factor because at some point in the process there is likely to be fear of being on the wrong side if those armies should move. But we exaggerate this factor and we do not emphasize enough our responsibility to help free nations to overcome the internal political and social weakness which invites Communist penetration. Where the military threat is greatest now the situation has some of the characteristics of civil war as in the struggle over Formosa, the uneasy truce in Korea, and the confused condition of Indo-China.

Barbara Ward has called attention to the fact that the state of Andhra in India which voted against the Communists, so strongly and against expectations, did so in part because of the definite improvement in the food supply which began when the United States sent wheat to help overcome the famine which afflicted that part of India. If her interpretation is correct, this one episode should

help us to regain a sense of proportion in weighing the military and non-military factors in Asia's struggle against communism.

2. *There is a tendency for the United States to see Asia too much from the standpoint of a few nations which are willing to become explicitly our allies.* This is natural and the tendency is strengthened by strategic considerations connected with our own security which are based on the map. But the danger is that we may cut ourselves off from the most powerful resources for freedom in Asia. The Indian leaders often say foolish things about the international conflict and they have illusions about Chinese Communism but they are resolutely and successfully anti-communist so far as India is concerned. If Nehru and his government continue to be successful in showing the way to a constructive alternative to communism for India, they will make their greatest contribution to the freedom of Asia and of the world. It is quite possible that they may be the more successful in this if they demonstrate that they are independent of American policy.

One result of this tendency to concentrate on only a part of Asia is the present talk about losing face if we do not maintain a rigid position in regard to Quemoy and Matsu. With whom would we lose face? Perhaps with Thailand and the Philippines though this would not be an irretrievable loss. Certainly with the Chinese Nationalists and with South Korea. There is also a problem in connection with the Indo-Chinese states though there are many other factors involved in the confused existence of those states. But we would gain face with the people of Japan, who fear nuclear warfare above everything else in the world. And we would gain face with India, Burma and Indonesia as well as with all of our European allies. Pakistan seems to be a special case.

3. *There seems to be an assumption that our alliance with the Chinese Nationalists would take the curse of imperialism off any attack by us as a white, Western nation upon the mainland of China.* It is highly doubtful if this would be the case because of the extent to which the Nationalists have

been rejected by most Asian nations and because they can be so easily regarded as agents of American policy. This has nothing to do with the defense of Formosa against military attack. Such defense is here taken for granted, whatever may be said about the ultimate status of that island.

4. *There is a failure to imagine the repercussions throughout Asia if the United States became involved in nuclear war against the mainland of China.* There are very powerful and highly vocal senators, as well as military authorities, who think in terms of a quick military victory over China through the use of tactical nuclear bombs. Whether such a victory is possible or not we cannot say. But even if it were possible, it might well strengthen rather than weaken the power of communism on the continent of Asia. It would probably create a moral revulsion against us among the peoples of Asia, including the people of Japan, which would make the Communist nations seem to shine by contrast. It is difficult for us to imagine how far nuclear weapons have become symbolic, how far their use would arouse both resentment and horror. If our policy-makers neglect these intangible factors in their pre-occupation with military considerations they may not only lead our people into a terrible moral isolation—in relation to both Europe and Asia—but they may also unwittingly aid the cause of communism as it seeks to win control over the people of free Asia.

5. *The direct influence of the Chinese Nationalists on our public opinion and on our policy has been the source of dangerous illusions and has, to an extraordinary extent, narrowed our view of Asia.* Let it be admitted that the supporters of the Nationalists have been more nearly right than their critics here and in Britain concerning the doctrinaire and ruthless and fanatical character of Chinese Communism. Yet, that has not made them right about the possible moral and political health of the Nationalist regime as an alternative. Today there are very few people who share the hope that the Nationalists can return to the mainland but these few have great influence within one important faction in Washington. We are committed to the defense of Formosa as the Nationalists' place of asylum and as the home of eight million Formosans. But we shall not be able to view Asia without great distortions until our government and our people cease to be under the direct influence of the Chinese Nationalists. This influence may even drag us and perhaps all humanity into a preventive war.

J. C. B.

EDITORIAL NOTES

Both the Lutheran and the Catholic Bishops of Berlin have had to deal recently with the explicitly religious dimension of modern religio-political movements. The Communist authorities in East Germany thought it smart to devise a pledge to communism for young people which closely resembled the Christian confirmation service. Both bishops advised the faithful that they must not pledge themselves in this way. It remains to be seen whether any of the youthful non-conformists will suffer dire consequences at the hands of the totalitarian regime.

This incident is not a mere coincidence. The bogus political confirmation services are symbols of religio-political movements, whether Nazi or Communist. They are "totalitarian" precisely because they demand absolute commitment for a political program. Any political program may be comparatively adequate or inadequate. But it becomes evil at the precise moment when it obscures the ambiguity in the political sphere and demands a loyalty which can be pledged only to God. The incident is not important in itself in days of greater alarms and cruelties. But it serves to remind us that a secular age has spawned these idolatrous religions, and that a generation which thought itself rid of God must now face these idolatrous religious claims.

R.N.

Many of our readers will welcome the fact that at a most critical moment in the recent discussion of our policy in Asia, the leaders of the National Council of Churches sent the following telegram to the President. Since so little of this message was printed in the press, we are publishing it in full.

"We the undersigned officers of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. appeal to you to take all honorable steps to the end that the crisis in Asia of which the Formosa Strait issue is a part, may be peaceably resolved. We look to you to resist the pressure of those who, however sincere, appear to advocate policies that could lead to a third world war. We would regard as extremely unfortunate any course of action in Asia that would imperil the goodwill and co-operation of our friends and allies.

"It is our fervent desire that in this hour of national peril you will once again call upon the American people to exercise patience and restraint: that you will caution against the risks of unilateral action: that you will utilize to the fullest extent such facilities for negotiation as may be available through the United Nations or elsewhere.

"The Chinese communist regime is a force in being, even though we do not recognize it or deal with it in the United Nations. At present there exists between that regime and our government only a menacing stalemate. The security of our nation, as well as our tradition

of responsibility in world affairs, requires that every possible effort be made to resolve this problem. We believe negotiation is the most practicable means for seeking solutions consistent with principle. We reject the view that negotiation is appeasement. Appeasement lies in the surrender of principle.

"It is true that experience with communism teaches us that what passes for negotiation only too often is a cover for deceit. Yet this very fact can, by skillful diplomacy, be converted into a means of enlightening world opinion concerning the pitfalls on the way to peace. We are not competent to suggest what the most effective procedures for negotiation may be under the circumstances currently prevailing. We are convinced, however, that there is no substitute for negotiation ex-

cept the arbitrament of force, which creates vastly greater problems than it can ever solve."

EUGENE CARSON BLAKE

President

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The Religious Vision of Arnold Toynbee

ROGER L. SHINN

ANY attempt to evaluate Arnold J. Toynbee's *A Study of History* rates a quizzical smile from those in the know. Book reviewing at best is a dubious enterprise in which ignorant persons indulge their egos by delivering verdicts on the work of others. The irony reaches some kind of height when one tries in a few pages to say something just about a ten-volume, 6,289 page enterprise, or when in a few weeks one thinks through an argument that has been 32 years in the making.

To complicate the problem, Toynbee is a profoundly disconcerting writer. He produces the dizzying effect of modern maps with unusual perspectives and projections, showing the old landmarks in unfamiliar relations. He exhilarates, annoys, infuriates, and inspires. He loves to pronounce unconventional judgment—e.g., that a dirty monk living on a pillar sways the world more effectively than an emperor, or that in Islam the thinking faculty has played a more responsible role than in Christianity. He enjoys giving us, in extensive footnotes and annexes, a running dialogue with his critics.

Nor is that all. This man, who dreams in Latin, writes his chapters in six languages—fortunately with little Italian. He is a master of pedantic sentences, passages that even he can call "outlandish," and constant cross-references throughout ten volumes. Yet he can produce brilliant figures of speech, flashing humor and satire, and prose that creates a mystical spell.

Small wonder that critics disagree, or that many rush into print without reading Toynbee or facing his argument. If the following paragraphs use the pronoun *I* too frequently, the reason is simply to mark some judgments, not as deliverances from heaven, but as the responses of one person who has tried to study *A Study of History*.

I. What History Is All About

The historian's work, to start where Toynbee concludes, rises out of a lively curiosity about facts and relations between facts. But great historical writing, because it sees also the poetry of history, is often akin to the lyric and the epic, to fiction and to drama.

Led from "the poetry in the facts" to look for "the meaning behind the facts," we confront two rival versions of the total epic of history. One version develops the idea, "Man Makes Himself"—a phrase from V. Gordon Childe which fits as well H. G. Wells. The other version is the Psalmist's theme, "It is He that hath made us and not we ourselves." Toynbee, entranced by this second version, bucks head-on the prevailing schools of positivistic or skeptical historiography, which either deny any meaning of history or claim that (if it exists) it is no business of historical research.

Why is there such stark opposition between these two versions? Toynbee's answer is that all men are constantly tempted by the idolatry of creature-worship. This idolatry runs out in disillusion. To such skepticism Toynbee responds: "A spectacle in which no meaning can be found, so long as the meaning of it is sought in the creature's vain endeavors, proves to be meaningful as soon as the meaning of it is sought in the Creator's indwelling purpose. . . . The purpose of God that is the reason for Man's existence is that the creature should re-enter into communion with its Creator." (Vol. X, p. 128)

Hence Toynbee testifies that his own vocation is a search for God and that history is to him a vision "of God revealing Himself in action to souls that were sincerely seeking Him. (Vol. X, No. 1) He acknowledges inspiration from the Bible and from St. Augustine, and he often writes in the tradition of Christian theology.

But equally important is the mysticism which inspires Toynbee. He candidly recounts "moments in his mental life—moments as memorable as they are rare—in which temporal and spatial barriers fall and psychic distance is annihilated." (Vol. X, p. 130) On three or four occasions, as he was reading historical writings, he felt himself no longer a reader but a participant in events of the past. Six more such occasions were inspired by landscapes and monuments. One unique experience, "larger and stranger" than the rest, brought "communion, not just with this or that episode in history, but with all that had been, and was, and was to come." (Vol. X, p. 139)

II. The Vision and the Facts

What does the vision of the meaning of history have to do with the things that happen in history? Toynbee answers boldly in terms of the Church.

Long before he shares his personal inspirations, Toynbee has been aiming to develop *empirically* a hypothesis about history and the Church. The background is the familiar thesis of the earlier six volumes: the theme of challenge-and-response which accounts for the genesis, growth, breakdown, and disintegration of civilizations. In its time of troubles a civilization produces a universal state, a mighty effort to arrest decay. Within the state may emerge a church, the expression of a higher religion. Now in his final volumes Toynbee analyzes three possible relations between church and civilization.

(A) *The Church as a Cancer*. The ancient Celsus, like the modern Gibbon and Frazer, regarded the church as a cancer infecting society with unhealthy individualism and otherworldliness. Toynbee rejects this thesis on two grounds. (1) Empirical evidence shows—to take Rome as an example—that the empire was well on its way to destruction before Christianity entered the picture. (2) In the nature of the case a higher religion, by aiming for something greater than social welfare, actually helps society. Though the desperate efforts of the universal state only make more sure its destruction, the Church may actually strengthen civilization.

(B) *The Church as a Chrysalis*. By this hypothesis the Church serves civilization "by preserving a precious germ of life through the perilous interregnum" between death of an old civilization and birth of a new. Thus the Roman Church survived the empire and transmitted a heritage of order and learning to the rising Western civilization. Toynbee, though once satisfied with this "rather patronizing view," now finds evidence refuting it.

(C) *The Church as a Higher Species of Society*. In a synoptic view of history the 21 identifiable civilizations (or 26 or 30, depending on the method of counting) fall into three generations. First-

generation civilizations, rising out of primitive society, produce mere rudimentary higher religions. Only second-generation civilizations produce true higher religions, which serve as chrysalises for third-generation civilizations. Now these third-generation civilizations in their times of troubles are apparently *not* producing new higher religions comparable with the great ones of the past.

Here Toynbee works out in detail the startling hypothesis (previously suggested in his Burge Lecture of 1940) that *civilizations exist to serve churches*. The rises and falls of civilizations, like revolving wheels, carry forward the progressive movement of religion. For religion advances especially in the decline of civilization, as suffering brings men closer to wisdom and to God. "On this reading, the history of Religion appears to be unitary and progressive by contrast with the multiplicity and repetitiveness of the histories of civilizations." (Vol. VII, pp. 426-27) Though the higher religions have their corruptions and their conflicts, they are in essence variations on a single theme, diffractions of a single light.

Thus the first two generations of civilization served their purpose in providing the conditions for the growth of higher religions. The civilizations of the third generation (including our own) are vain repetitions, which serve only one real purpose: the providing of a world-wide field of activity for the higher religions and the furnishing to religions of the challenge of recrudescant paganism and Caesar-worship.

All this Toynbee states in hypothetical sentences, usually beginning with *if*-clauses. Finally, however, he states directly his conclusion that civilizations "have forfeited their historical significance except in so far as they minister to the progress of Religion." (Vol. VII, p. 449)

Thus the church is a "higher species of society" than a civilization, just as civilization is a higher species than primitive society. One possible outcome is that "the historic living churches might eventually give expression to the unity in their diversity by growing together into a single terrestrial Church Militant." (Vol. VII, pp. 555-56) Such an event would not bring the Kingdom of God to earth, because original sin would remain. Mankind would still need the sanction of force and the work of Caesar. Even so, the Kingdom of God might thus irradiate and transfigure the world, bringing both spiritual progress and (as a kind of by-product) a secular progress "far greater than could be attained by aiming direct at a mundane goal." It might have the "incidental effect of ridding terrestrial human life of the ordinary social evils—the scourge of war and the cancer of class-conflict." (Vol. VII, pp. 562-67)

III. A Theological Critique of an Anti-Theological Theology

This perverse title could come only from someone who makes a living out of theology. But in defense I can only say, "He asked for it."

Toynbee roundly criticizes theology for stultifying true religion. Any theologian knows the truth in his attack. However, Toynbee attacks not bad theology but the theological enterprise as such—supporting his position by frequent quotations from theologian Emil Brunner, who must be rubbing his eyes to find himself so successful a foe of theology. Furthermore Toynbee uses his assaults on theology as a means to develop his own theology, which has much to be said both for and against it.

A. The Theology of the Church

In *myth*, says Toynbee, "the Truth can be uttered whole and entire because 'the ineffable is here accomplished.'" (The last clause is from Goethe.) Theology is "Reason's misguided attempt to state intuitive truth in terms of intellectual truth" in a "counterpart of magic." I hope it is not just perversity that leads me to see in Toynbee's doctrine of the Church exactly that error. He has taken his grand intuition of the relation of God to the meaning of history and has chained it to a logically weak prophecy regarding the institutional church.

I say this for two reasons. (1) Toynbee's argument about the Church lacks sufficient empirical evidence to support it. I will not pit my puny knowledge of history against Toynbee's mighty resources, but I will suggest that his method has inadequacies in induction and signs of a circular argument. Rather than take several pages to document this claim, I will simply say for the time being that I have yet to run across any professional historian who has been won by the evidence to agree with Toynbee's ecclesiastical doctrine.

(2) The prophecies for the Church, tentative though they are, raise great theological difficulties. With his typical generosity in presenting the arguments against his own position, Toynbee has stated the problems better than I can. Our only difference is that I think he has not answered the objections he raises.

Through ten volumes Toynbee has warned against the church which loses its soul by seeking political supremacy. Repeatedly he has pointed out the dangers of the state-church. Going farther—with a telling footnote to Reinhold Niebuhr—he sees an "idolized church" as the only idol more pernicious than the totalitarian state. (Vol. VII, p. 548) He shows how the "institutional armor" of the church, though necessary, tends to impede and defeat it. He compares orthodox Christianity with communism,

finding both to be "rival authoritarian and dogmatic faiths." (Vol. IX, pp. 643-44)

After pointing out all these difficulties, he is extremely vague in spelling out the relation of his future church to the work of Caesar. Perhaps a "single Church Militant on Earth" will *replace* the "multiplicity of civilizations." (Vol. IX, p. 556) I am not sure what that means, but it scares me. It frightens Toynbee, too; and to so nasty a "totalitarianism" he prefers that Caesar stay alive but subordinate to the church. It is not clear how this arrangement would differ from past ecclesiastically-dominated civilizations—except that the church presumably would be a better one. That still scares me. And I wonder whether Toynbee is coasting on the impetus of a philosophy of progress which he has previously unmasked.

For clarification of these general predictions we can look to the more specific analysis of the "Prospects of the Western Civilization." Here we find the "conclusive" reaffirmation that the roles "of Caesar and Christ could never both be played by the same person or same people." (Vol. IX, p. 626) There is the same hope for a religious renewal, this time with advice to look to the Orient for light. But the concept of the church is not invoked here, and the relation of religion to the work of Caesar is left as vague as before.

The same Toynbee who today attacks theology said as recently as 1948 that, as the historian seeks "some gleam of insight into the meaning of this mysterious spectacle," he finds that "history passes over into theology." Now I must ask whether a little more attention to theology might not make Toynbee a more empirical historian. For most theologians, taught by the Bible the mysteries of God's providence and the nature of human sin, are far less eager than Toynbee to tie their faith in God to predictions about the ecclesiastical institutions which both worship and defy God.

B. The Theology of World Religions

In his volumes published in 1935 Toynbee described our system of dating (B.C. and A.D.) as a historical accident. The egocentric illusion of the early Christians had projected a division of time, important for them, on to the whole of history. (Vol. I, pp. 169-70)

By 1939 his stance had shifted. In surveying the many would-be saviors *of* and *from* society he found all failing except "The God Incarnate in a Man." And investigating the claimants to this role, he ended by quoting John 3:16 and saying that "a single figure . . . fills the whole horizon." (Vol. VI, p. 278) Despite other ambiguous discussions in Volumes III-VI, this statement seemed to confess some kind of finality in Christ.

But Volumes VII-X revert to the earlier position. In a running debate with Martin Wight, British historian and churchman, Toynbee says that the four great higher religions (Hinduism, Mahayana Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam) represent four roads to God. Their differences are matters of historical diversity and of human temperament; their "essence" is the same.

What can a Christian say to this? When Toynbee asks, "How can the presence of a hypothetically infinite and eternal God be supposed to make itself felt more palpably in Palestine than in Alberta?" one may answer him with his own earlier question, "Is God's economy . . . to be dictated to God by Man?" (Vol. VII, pp. 430-31, Vol. VI, p. 538) But when Toynbee describes religious parochialism as an example of the egocentric illusion, of hybris, of sin, he is harder to answer. Some of his recent critics simply confirm his point, when they take the line: "See here, Mr. Toynbee. You know a lot, but you can't convince me my religion isn't better than those over in Asia."

A Christian had better be humble here. Certainly he had better agree in refusing to claim "a monopoly of the Divine Light." (Vol. VII, p. 428) But this is not quite the issue. The question which Toynbee avoids is this one: Did God *act* in Jesus of Nazareth for man's salvation?

Toynbee sometimes almost says yes. But in the end of his own religion, though steeped in his Biblical heritage, is probably a religion of mysticism rather than of divine activity in history. He revels in "the musical flow of the all-embracing ocean of history." (Vol. X, p. 116) (One thinks of the "oceanic sense" of Arthur Koestler's old Bolshevik, Rubashov.) Toynbee, I think it is fair to say, sees history less as the arena of activity in which God comes to man than as the experience of suffering in which man experiences God's grace.

One can ask further questions on the pure logic of Toynbee's position. (1) Does he fall into the religious syncretism which in Volume V he saw as a sign of civilization's decay? He says not. He wants the religions to intermingle geographically, affording individuals a chance to choose their path to God. But what of his universal church militant which encompasses four religions? And what of his eloquent final prayer, addressed to Christ Tammuz, Christ Adonis, Christ Balder, and a host of deities and philosophers, as well as Christ Jesus? (2) Does he fall victim to the error he warns against—the pursuit of "the will-o'-the-wisp of Omniscience"? (3) When he says that the various religions are fitted to the various psychological types (following Jung's analysis), does he not logically limit himself to saying that—whatever the truth may be—something between Christianity and Radhakrishnan's Hinduism

fits Arnold Toynbee's psychology? (4) When he asserts monotheism as against polytheism and rejects the world-fleeing forms of Hinduism, is he not a bit "parochial"? (5) When he repeatedly insists upon the reality of original sin, is he not claiming a superiority for the dogmas of some religions as against the dogmas which deny original sin?

A thorough answer to these questions would take long. I can simply express appreciation for the integrity of Toynbee's inquiry, along with a concern for the questions it raises.

An Apology

These remarks leave me with a disquieting feeling. I have never read a criticism or summary of Toynbee that I thought was quite fair. My own is not, though it tries to be. The trouble is that any summary (including the one-volume abridgement of Vols. I-VI, good as it is) hides the greatness of Toynbee.

That greatness, as I see it, lies in the incredible luxuriance of his thought, the astounding learning, the insights that leap from the pages like displays of fireworks, the poetic quality that illumines commonplace subjects, the fascinating and dangerous analogies.

As in arguing with any epic poet, there is a sort of futility in arguing with Toynbee. Since he does offer an argument, others should examine it, and I'm pleased to do my bit. But my argument tells little of my gratitude to this scholar, poet, mystic and prophet—or of my eagerness to see his promised volume of *Reconsiderations*.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors:

I have been a subscriber of your for quite a number of years and cordially agree with your keen and realistic analysis of European politics and the inadequacy of unsupported individual intelligence—continental enlightenment style—to lead humanity to a haven of bliss.

I cannot quite go along with you in a recent statement in your columns that you go back to the Reformation rather than to all enlightenment (February 7, 1955 issue).

The Reformation, particularly the Lutheran one, had to fall back on the Bible without quibbling to get a firm stand on against the world's greatest ecclesiastical power. That does not mean, however, that such a crude literalistic stand is adequate today. It has caused the greatest spiritual personality of our time, Mahatma Gandhi, to reject ecclesiastical Christianity utterly.

American enlightenment, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, differs from the continental European kind by its strong expression of reliance on Divine Providence, a reliance that Washington, as well as Franklin, declared unmistakably justified by the events of the war.

I hold that belief myself; and being a practical
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Saint Hereticus

Note: The intention of St. Hereticus (for the benefit of mystified readers who have not previously encountered him) is never to destroy the Church or the faith. He desires only to keep the Church from fulfilling her *real* mission, and to distort the faith just enough so that it is rendered innocuous, and no one is really excited by "the romance of orthodoxy." St. Hereticus is all for faith, so long as it is something other than the full Christian faith.

HERETICUS, JR.

UNDOING THE MINISTER'S WORK—II

My desire has always been to promote gentle heresy. The heresy must not be extreme, or it will be detected and perhaps cast out. One of the most effective ways to achieve this end is to concentrate on the minister himself. Consider, my most faithful disciples, the following tried and true ways of exploiting the minister, so that he becomes less and less able to proclaim the gospel.

The first way is to deny the priesthood of all believers and promote the heresy that everything in the life of the church depends on the minister himself. The seeds can be planted just before a new minister arrives at a church. A few conversations opened with the words, "When the new minister comes . . ." can lead to the impression that certainly within a month of his arrival:

- a. Sunday School attendance will double.
- b. Giving will treble.
- c. Not only will there be two services on Sunday morning, but the sanctuary will have to be enlarged to accommodate the crowds.
- d. The bulletin will be printed on glossy paper instead of being mimeographed on the back side of those garish colored pictures sent from a religious supply house.

When the new minister does come, of course, none of these things will happen, or if they do, they will happen only very slowly. And then the people are able to blame the minister because he is not the sort of spiritual Superman they had expected. More significantly, they can avoid the obvious conclusion that these things are *their* responsibility as well, and perhaps avoid forever the less obvious (but more important) conclusion that these things are not really very important things in the life of the church, anyhow. What more appealing heresy could there be than one which says

that the church is not really the Church unless it is a constantly buzzing hive of feverish activity, of many groups so busy being active that none of them is ever sure quite what the purpose of the activity is, and all of them much too busy ever to stop long enough to reflect upon the words, "Be Still, and know that I am God." Gifted indeed is the minister who can counter this, *so* gifted, that he will probably be called to "a wider field of service" (a phrase of my own invention) long before he effectively stifles the heresy.

A second way to undo the minister's work is to insist that his pastoral functions be measured on an efficiency basis. Let us say the minister takes his pastoral calling seriously. He's not one of these in-and-out-in-five-minutes-how's-the-family-why-wasn't-your-husband-in-church-last-Sunday-got-to-run-along-now-see-you-next-Sunday-with-your-husband-hearty-chuckle sort of pastors. No, he tries to get well-acquainted, to build up a relationship not only for the present moment but for that day when he may have to enter the household in time of real need or tragedy, to pray, even on occasion to bring the sacrament to the bedside.

These things all take time. And they have the frightening possibility of deepening the faith of all concerned. Therefore, the efficient promoter of heresy can undo all this work simply by a well-timed complaint at the Ladies' Aid, or the Men's Fellowship, "What does that pastor of ours *do* all the time? Doesn't he *ever* go calling? Does he just *sit* in his office all day? Or go out and play golf? (I'm almost *positive* I saw him on the golf course three Mondays ago.) Why, he hasn't been to call in our home for *six months!*"

Chances are that the majority of any given church group will be able to say the same thing. (The fact that there are 956 members in the church, and only one pastor, is of course an irrelevant consideration.) Thus the heretic has helpfully exploited the notion that the minister isn't really busy enough, or that he doesn't seem to get any calling done. In this way an atmosphere of thinly-veiled suspicion and distrust can be quire so much of the pastor's effort that there will be little time left for the gospel to be heard or appropriated.

Finally, my brethren (appeals for heresy should be couched in orthodox terminology whenever possible), there can be subtle attempts not merely to undo the minister's work, but (putting it bluntly) to undo the minister. The most efficient method is surely flattery. A politician, I have discovered, always has enemies to keep him humble. But a minister! He can always be told how "wonderful" he is, how "helpful," how "necessary," how much his sermons are "enjoyed." The gradual multiplication of such comments by the lovers of heresy will unhinge the humility of even the most dedicated servant of God.

Or, it may be enough merely to stop referring to "Trinity Presbyterian Church" and begin referring to "Rev. Mr. Blank's Church." This will reap subtle results of a most rewarding sort. And if, in addition, a few people begin to talk about going on Sunday morning not to worship God but rather "to hear Mr. Blank

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Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion
537 West 121st St., New York 27, N. Y.

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preach," then conditions will be created in which heresy can grow quietly and unobtrusively until it quite chokes out any real belief. Sooner or later, Mr. Blank will begin an illustration in his sermon with the words, "A woman came into my study last week . . ." and go on to show *not* how the power of the gospel saved the situation, but how frightfully clever he was in diagnosing her problem and providing her with a ready-made solution of his own. This, indeed, is heresy at its best, and it makes all the sons of heterodoxy rejoice, clap their hands, and sing for joy. Alleluia!

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CORRESPONDENCE

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scientist and researchman myself am glad to note that the greatest scientific philosopher of our day, Alfred North Whitehead, held to the same idea.

The Laws of Nature and Nature's God may be closely identifiable, and "in him we live and move, and have our being." Yet, that exactly means that in evolutionary emergence God manifests himself quite clearly.

Sincerely yours,
CARL A. NORMAN.

CHURCH NEWS AND NOTES

Foundation Proposes Coexistence Commission

In a letter to the President of the United States dated April 1, the trustees of the Church Peace Union requested the President to consider the establishment of a Commission on Competitive Coexistence. The trustees also adopted a resolution on aid to Asia which deals with the economic competition now taking place in much of Asia.

A Commission on Competitive Coexistence, the letter suggests, might bring together a group of the ablest and most eminent American citizens to study intensively how the United States can help avert total war and can contribute to the growth of a freer and more just world. It would be designed to augment what the Administration and the Department of State are already doing to maintain international peace.

The Church Peace Union trustees commended the President for his firm stand against preventive war and for his resolute efforts to lessen international tension. In the letter "competitive coexistence" is described as the only alternative to atomic war. It suggests no trace of appeasement or communism or capitulation to it.

The aid to Asia resolution points to the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, this month as highlighting the supreme importance of the Asian nations in the current international situation.

The resolution states that the coming years will probably see increased economic competition in Asia between the Western nations and the Soviet bloc, and urges the U. S. government to give prompt attention to the two issues. There are the appropriation of approximately \$1 billion for Asian aid programs as requested by the Administration, and the extension of the tenure of the Foreign Operations Administration after June, 1955, or the setting up of a new agency to direct these programs.

Both the letter to the President and the resolution were signed for the trustees by the Rev. Ralph W. Sockman, President of the foundation, and by Dr. Henry A. Atkinson, General Secretary. The Church Peace Union was founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1914 to work through the major religious faiths for a greater measure of world order.

Author in This Issue

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